

# OAK RIDGE NATIONAL LABORATORY

OPERATED BY

UNION CARBIDE NUCLEAR COMPANY



POST OFFICE BOX P  
OAK RIDGE, TENNESSEE

Office of the Director

April 16, 1957

Professor Leo Szilard  
Department of Biophysics  
The University of Chicago  
Chicago 36, Illinois

Dear Szilard:

It was very pleasant to have you visit us. I am enclosing my articles on "Some Problems in the Development of the National Laboratories," and "Future Aims of Large Scale Research." Herman Kahn's address is The Rand Corporation, 1700 Main Street, Santa Monica, California. I think you will find his article "Techniques of Systems Analysis," Report MR-1829, Rand Research Memorandum, very interesting.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alvin M. Weinberg".

Alvin M. Weinberg

AMW/jk

Encs.

*Canfield*

April 16, 1957

Dr. Alvin Weinberg  
Director  
The Oak Ridge National Laboratory  
Oak Ridge, Tennessee

Dear Al,

Since you wanted me to do something to check the uncontrolled growth of population, you will now have to read the enclosed memoranda. I am not able as yet to estimate the chances that Mr. Canfield will be able to raise the funds that are needed and, therefore, I am not asking you for the present to say whether you might be willing to join this organization as an Affiliate Member.

With kind personal regards,

Sincerely,

Leo Szilard

m  
Encl.

P.S. If you have time to jot down your reactions to these memoranda, you might send your remarks to Mr. Cass Canfield -- and perhaps a copy to me. Canfield's address is: Harper and Bros., Publishers, 49 East 33rd Street, New York City. You will certainly hear from him when he returns from Europe but this might be still several weeks off. In the meantime your letter will await his arrival.

Canfield is Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors of Harper and Bros., Publishers.

OAK RIDGE NATIONAL LABORATORY

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POST OFFICE BOX P  
OAK RIDGE, TENNESSEE

Office of the Director

April 23, 1957

Mr. Cass Canfield  
Harper and Brothers, Publishers  
49 East 33rd Street  
New York, New York

Dear Mr. Canfield:

Leo Szilard has asked me to comment on his and Dr. Doering's prospectus for a Research Institute for Fundamental Biology and Public Health and for an Institute for Problem Studies. As I read the document my admiration for Szilard, which has always been very high, further increased. Szilard is the most imaginative scientist I have known; the wealth of original ideas in this document is astonishing.

I have been particularly concerned, for two entirely different reasons, about the issues which Szilard raises. First, as Director of one of the Atomic Energy Commission's large National Laboratories, I have been uncomfortable about the very long-term future of such institutions. The problems of nuclear energy are finite, and there will come a time when the National Laboratories will have to turn to quite different areas of research. Szilard's proposed Institute is a sort of blueprint for one possible long-term development of the National Laboratories. My second reason for interest in the proposal has to do with the obvious fact that the problem of population control is central to the problem of maintaining our present thermonuclear peace. In a recent article (which I enclose) I alluded to this relation. I spoke rather wistfully of the hope that "science, in its infinite wisdom, will in due course solve the psychological, as well as biological, problems of birth control". Should this Institute make even a good start in that direction, it would be a first-rate achievement. With the idea, and even with much of the detailed plan for the Institute, I am in very good agreement. In a way, what is proposed is an Institute for Advanced Study in the fields of biology and public health. Such an institution would be extremely worthwhile, even if it does not solve the problems which it sets out to solve.

What troubles me is the disparity between what I suspect to be the scale of the problem and the scale of the Institute. I do not believe that as small an institution as is contemplated can be expected to make the kind of discoveries which are mentioned in the prospectus. This does not detract from the advisability of setting up the Institute - it simply means that miracles should not be expected.

April 23, 1957

One of the most difficult problems in such an Institute is to find a person who can organize it and lead it at its beginning. While the basic merit of the whole idea - the fact that the problems to be done are really important - augurs well for the health of the institution, it would be very important to find a person who combines just the right qualities of scientific insight, enthusiasm, salesmanship, and practicality to get it started. Szilard's notion that most of the really good young biologists would flock to the newly-formed Institute, I think, is rather optimistic. The calibre of the staff will hardly be as high as the calibre of the leader; it usually is considerably worse. I hope you could find for a director someone who in biology occupies the same position of prestige as, say, Niels Bohr and E. P. Wigner do in physics. The Institute would then have a fighting chance to attract the people Szilard believes are necessary.

I understand that you personally have taken an interest in the possibility of such an Institute. I wonder if you have approached the insurance companies for support. I have always been struck by the fact that our insurance companies are our strongest financial institutions; yet, as far as I know, they spend very little on research. Most research in public health, insofar as it ultimately leads to lengthening of life, redounds to the financial benefit of the insurance companies - rates at any given time would always be higher than necessary if the life expectancy could be increased continually. I mention this possibility without having any real feeling of what the problems are of interesting the insurance people.

To summarize, I think Szilard's Institute is a fine idea. I hardly believe it will make as large a dent on the Important Problems as Szilard hopes; but, handled properly, it certainly can be an extremely worthwhile enterprise which deserves imaginative and substantial support.

Sincerely yours,

Original Signed By  
Alvin M. Weinberg  
Alvin M. Weinberg

AMW/jk

Enc.

cc: L. Szilard 

FROM: OAK RIDGE NATIONAL LABORATORY  
Post Office Box P  
Oak Ridge, Tennessee  
Office of the Director

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Harper and Brothers, Publishers  
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New York, New York

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Sincerely yours,

Alvin M. Weinberg

AMW/jk

Encl.

cc: L. Szilard

# OAK RIDGE NATIONAL LABORATORY

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UNION CARBIDE NUCLEAR COMPANY



POST OFFICE BOX P  
OAK RIDGE, TENNESSEE

Office of the Director

November 4, 1957

Dr. Leo Szilard  
c/o Mr. Morton Grodzins  
Department of Political Science  
The University of Chicago  
Chicago 37, Illinois

Dear Dr. Szilard:

I am in favor of a series of meetings of the type you have outlined. My reason for favoring the meeting is, however, rather different from yours. I don't think the agenda you have drawn up is likely to lead to practical measures for stabilizing the stalemate. As usual, I find your ideas wonderfully ingenious; but I just don't think the stabilization of the stalemate is to be found in any pat scheme or as the result of any set of rules. The stabilization can come only from a general amelioration of the conditions of life, and from a corresponding blurring of the sharp differences of doctrine between East and West.

My reason for strongly supporting such meetings is therefore based on my belief that every contact between Eastern and Western technicians, especially under relatively free conditions, will help bring about a workable synthesis of the Collectivist and Individualist outlooks. Some kind of synthesis seems to me to be the inevitable alternative to extinction; it is up to us who value individualism to do what we can to place the center of gravity of this synthetic system close to what we consider proper and just. Your agenda therefore appears to me to be mainly useful as a framework for some discussion, although not, to my mind, the most essential discussion. But to get discussion on any topic going between Eastern and Western technicians is a great achievement; I would hope that future conferences could gradually work around to a reassessment of the Marxian collective system itself.

As for the University of Chicago being a sponsor, I see no objection. I understand that Columbia University sponsors meetings on broad topics each year at Arden House; the last one was on U. S. atomic power policy. With such a precedent set by Columbia, I do not see why, in principle, Chicago could not be a proper sponsoring instrument.

Dr. Leo Szilard

- 2 -

November 4, 1957

One practical matter: I can't imagine how you can expect to get many of the people on your mailing list to spend 10 days at such a conference; for that matter, I can't quite visualize how you can keep the conversation going meaningfully for that length of time, at least at the first meeting.

I shall be in Chicago on and off during the Fall quarter; perhaps we can have dinner together and talk some more about this.

Sincerely yours,

*Alvin M. Weinberg*  
Alvin M. Weinberg

AMW:c



July 14, 1958

Dr. Alvin Weinberg, Director  
The Oak Ridge National Laboratory  
Oak Ridge, Tennessee

Dear Al:

Subsequent to our telephone conversation this morning, I had discussed with Jerry Weisner, Dick Leghorn and Walt Whitman your suggestion that Keith Glennan be approached and asked to participate in the study, and they all responded enthusiastically to it. Walt Whitman told me that he had talked over the telephone with Killian about the projected study and that, if Mr. Glennan appears interested, he would be very glad to speak to him over the telephone. His extension at M.I.T. is 561.

According to our present plans, Walter Whitman, Col. Leghorn and I would go to Moscow for the preparatory discussions if Topchiev accepts the dates suggested in the telegram, which is contained in the set of documents enclosed, or if he suggests an alternative date which is acceptable to us.

We had originally intended to include three to four members of the President's Science Advisory Committee among the participants in the first full-scale discussions--which we now propose be started in the second half of September. However, as matters stand now, there seems to be a feeling in Washington that no one

Z-Dr. Alvin Weinberg

July 14, 1958

who is in a policy-making position with respect to current official negotiations should participate in the Moscow discussions except, perhaps, as an "observer."

Previously, our project had been discussed individually with twelve of the members of the President's Science Advisory Committee, in addition to Dr. Killian.

We have particularly counted on Lloyd Berkner's participation in the preparatory discussions but, because of the recent car accident of his wife, he had to cancel his plans to go to Europe this summer.

In addition to Walter Whitman, those whom were approached by Wiesner, Leghorn or myself with a view of their active participation in the project are: Richard Feynman, Cal Tech; Harrison Brown, Cal Tech; Lee DuBridge, Cal Tech; T. F. Walkowitz, Rockefeller Brothers; Eugene Rabinowitch, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientist; H. C. Urey, University of Chicago, and yourself.

We also decided to approach H. J. Muller, University of Indiana.

We have been discussing the possibility of including either Bernard Feld or Martin Deutsch but, have so far not approached either. The same holds for Victor Weiskopff.

We have discussed the possibility of including J. H. Doolittle, Al Hill and Louis Ridenour. The first two of these would, however, probably not be able to participate because of their governmental connections and Ridenour, with whom Leghorn talked several times and who was interested, felt it would not be easy for him to get

3-Dr. Alvin Weinberg

July 14, 1958

the wholehearted approval of Lockheed. This might conceivably change if it becomes manifest that we are being encouraged by the U. S. Government and depending on just how strong this encouragement might turn out to be.

Everything looks now just right and my chief worry is that we do not have a sufficient number of participants who are imaginative, knowledgeable and willing to put in the required amount of time and effort.

I personally am inclined to believe that the American participants in this study ought to meet once a month in Washington, say on the first weekend of each month, beginning this Fall. This might make it necessary to include more participants from the East than we have so far planned, for it might be rather difficult for those on the West Coast to come to Washington once a month, or even once in two months.

Enclosed you will find a copy of this letter for your convenience and attached to it a set of the documents which describe the present state of this projected study. Of the funds needed, we have so far pledges for \$15,000 (three donations of \$5,000 each) which I have procured by means of telephone calls.

T. F. Walkowitz can also be counted on to do a little fund-raising and, if necessary, also Dick Leghorn, thus, I am not too worried about obtaining the funds. From what Walter Whitman tells me, it appears likely that the American Academy of

4-DR. ALVIN WEINBERG

July 17, 1950

Arts and Sciences may agree to handle the funds but, if this should fail us, the University of Chicago or the Massachusetts Institute of Technology are conceivable alternatives.

Sincerely,

Leo Szilard  
c/o Robert B. Livingston  
National Institutes of Health  
Bethesda 14, Maryland

Encs.

# OAK RIDGE NATIONAL LABORATORY

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UNION CARBIDE NUCLEAR COMPANY



POST OFFICE BOX X  
OAK RIDGE, TENNESSEE

Office of the Director

August 12, 1958

Dr. Leo Szilard  
Enrico Fermi Institute of  
Nuclear Studies  
The University of Chicago  
Chicago 37, Illinois

Dear Leo:

I checked with the AEC about my participation in the Moscow meeting; I was unable to get from them the kind of assurance I felt I needed to the effect that my presence there would not prove embarrassing to the Commission. I therefore must ask that my name be withdrawn from further consideration.

I am sorry that I was not able to get a definite answer to you earlier; I hope that my withdrawal at this late date does not complicate the arrangements.

With best wishes for a successful meeting.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Alvin'.

Alvin M. Weinberg

AMW:c



# OAK RIDGE NATIONAL LABORATORY

OPERATED BY

UNION CARBIDE NUCLEAR COMPANY



POST OFFICE BOX X  
OAK RIDGE, TENNESSEE

Office of the Director

June 10, 1960

Dr. Leo Szilard  
Department of Biophysics  
The University of Chicago  
Chicago 37, Illinois

Dear Leo:

I thought you would be interested in what the Russian humor magazine, Crocodile, says about your exchange scheme.

Best regards to Mrs. Szilard.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alvin".

Alvin M. Weinberg

AMW:c

Enclosure

I WILL EXCHANGE:

Detroit for Omsk? Philadelphia for Leningrad?

Such an unusual statement appeared recently on the pages of the American magazine, "Newsweek". It attracted at once universal attention.

Up to now international exchanges were widely used: among picture galleries, theatrical troupes, municipal delegations of cities ... but whole cities!

However, the American scientist, Dr. Leo Szilard proposes to exchange - is it true - not his own native city of Chicago, but Detroit and Philadelphia for Omsk and Leningrad. How come?

Before we hear about the conditions of this exchange, let us get acquainted with Mr. Szilard. According to his occupation, he is a physicist, and professionally he is connected not with an exchange office but with an atomic laboratory: He is one of the godfathers of the American atomic bomb. Yet, in the year of 1945, the doctor was among those scientists who appealed to President Truman not to drop atomic bombs on Japanese cities.

By 1960 the difference of opinion with the ex-president disappeared. With the years Leo Szilard acquired an enviable composure: Atomic weapons don't frighten him. The sixty-two-year-old American doctor, recovering from failing health in Room No. 812 of the New York Memorial Hospital, received the "Newsweek" reporter and let him in on the secret of his latest "discovery".

According to this theory of "exchange of cities", if the Americans drop hydrogen bombs on Omsk and Leningrad, the Soviet Union is requested to do the same to Detroit and Philadelphia, following the exchange.

"We have to learn to live with the atomic bomb," argues the atomic scientist. Russia and the United States will never become friends and will never disarm. Therefore, proposes Szilard, both countries must support the indefinite verbal threats with actual deeds; that is, from time to time they have to teach each other a visual lesson of the "limited atomic war". In the course of this instruction, "Russia would contribute Leningrad and Omsk in exchange of, let's say, Detroit and Philadelphia.

Of course, every man in his right mind agrees that the warming up of the international climate is not favorable to the "exchange" according to the prescription of the Chicago physicist. How much simpler would be the varying of this by exchanging .... rooms within the borders of the same city. The magazine, "Newsweek", should help Leo Szilard by inserting the following advertisement:

WILL EXCHANGE NEW YORK FOR NEW YORK ONE ROOM, NUMBER 812 (IN THE MEDICAL WING) - BRIGHT, WITH ALL COMFORTS - FOR A ROOM, NUMBER 6 (IN THE PSYCHIATRIC WING)
--



The thankful residents of Omsk, Detroit, Leningrad, and Philadelphia would assume payment for the ad.

Yu. Senin

Krokodil, April 20, 1960, No. 11 (1589)

**МЕНЯЮ:**

**Детройт на Омск?**

**Филадельфию на Ленинград?**

**ТАКОЕ** необычное объявление об обмене городами недавно появилось на страницах американского журнала «Ньюсуик». Оно сразу же привлекло к себе всеобщее внимание.

До сих пор широко практиковались всякого рода международные обмены: картинными галереями, театральными ансамблями, муниципальными делегациями городов, но обмен целыми городами!..

И однако американский ученый доктор Лео Сцилард предлагает обменять, правда, не свой родной Чикаго, а Детройт и Филадельфию на Омск и Ленинград. Какими образом?

...Прежде чем познакомиться с условиями обмена, познакомимся с господином Сцилардом. По специальности он биофизик, а по роду деятельности связан не с бюро обмена, а с атомной лабораторией: он один из крестных отцов американской атомной бомбы. Однако в 1945 году доктор был среди тех ученых, кто призывал президента Трумэна не обрасывать атомные бомбы на японские города.

К 1960 году какие-либо расхождения с экс-президентом у него исчезли. С годами Лео Сцилард обрел завидное хладнокровие: его уже не страшит никакое ядерное оружие. Шестидесятидвухлетний американский доктор, поправляющий свое пошатнувшееся здоровье в терапевтической палате № 812 нью-йоркского Мемориального госпиталя, принял корреспондента «Ньюсуик» и посвятил его в тайны своего последнего «открытия».

Теория «обмена городами» сводится к тому, чтобы американцы обросили на Омск и Ленинград водородные бомбы, Советам же рекомендуются в порядке обмена отправить на тот свет Детройт и Филадельфию.

— Мы должны научиться жить с атомной бомбой, — доказывает ученый-атомщик. — Россия и Соединенные Штаты никогда не станут друзьями и не разоружатся. Поэтому, — продолжает Сцилард, — обеим странам следует подкреплять «неопределенные словесные угрозы» практическими делами, то есть время от времени преподавать друг другу наглядные уроки «лимитированной атомной войны». В процессе обучения «России придется с обоюдного согласия пожертвовать Ленинградом и Омском в обмен, скажем, на Детройт и Филадельфию».

Всякий здравомыслящий человек, конечно, уверен, что потепление в международном климате вовсе не располагает к «обменам» по рецепту чикагского физика. Куда проще было бы осуществить вариант с обменом... палат в пределах одного города. Журнал «Ньюсуик» мог бы помочь Лео Сциларду, поместив нижеследующее объявление:

**МЕНЯЮ НЬЮ-ЙОРК НА НЬЮ-ЙОРК:  
ОДНУ ПАЛАТУ № 812 (ТЕРАПЕВТИЧЕСКУЮ), светлая, с удобствами, НА  
ОДНУ ПАЛАТУ № 6 (ПСИХИАТРИЧЕСКУЮ).**

Р. S. Доплату по обмену возьмут на себя благодарные жители Омска и Детройта, Ленинграда и Филадельфии.

**Ю. СЕНИН**

«Мировой капитализм и русское движение 1905 года омоничательно разбудили Азию. Сотни миллионов забитого, одичавшего в средневековом застое, населения проснулись к новой



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Y

July 17, 1958

Dr. Alvin Weinberg  
Director  
The Oak Ridge National Laboratory  
Oak Ridge, Tennessee

Dear Al:

Since I wrote you on July 14th, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in Boston has set up a Committee which will assume responsibility for the Study Relating to the World Security Problems Raised by the Bomb, about which I have written to you. The Committee is to be called, "A Special Committee on World Security Problems Raised by Nuclear Weapons."

There will be both a general supervisory committee and an operating subcommittee to carry out the study. The General Supervisory Committee will be under the Chairmanship of John T. Edsall of Harvard, and its other members are supposed to be: Saville R. Davis, Leo Szilard, Walter Whitman and Jerome Wiesner. The membership of the Operating Subcommittee is supposed to be: Leo Szilard (Chairman), Richard Leghorn, Walter Whitman and Jerome Wiesner.

I am enclosing an extra copy of the letter which you might want to pass on to Mr. Keith Glennan as information, additional to the material that you had sent him.

With kind regards.

Sincerely,

Leo Szilard

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July 14, 1958

Dr. Alvin Weinberg, Director  
The Oak Ridge National Laboratory  
Oak Ridge, Tennessee

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July 14, 1958

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July 14, 1958

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Sincerely,

Leo Szilard  
c/o Robert B. Livingston  
National Institutes of Health  
Bethesda 14, Maryland

Encs.

May 12, 1964

✓  
Dr. Alvin Weinberg, Director  
The Oak Ridge National Laboratory  
Oak Ridge, Tenn.

Dear Al:

The enclosed preprint might perhaps interest you. If you should ever visit the West Coast and plan to come down south as far as San Diego, please let me know ahead of time.

You can reach me over the telephome at The Salk Institute, 453-4100, Area Code 714.

Sincerely,

Leo Szilard

LS:jm

Enclosure